

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR UN SE

SUBJ: COMITE OF 24: STATEMENT BY CHIEF MINISTER OF

SEYCHELLES, MAY 17

1. JAMES MANCHAM DELIVERED VERY FRANK STATEMENT, EXPLAINING CHANGE IN HIS PARTY'S APPROACH TOWARD INDEPENDENCE. REALIZING THAT OAU WAS SUPPORTING MINORITY PARTY IN SEYCHELLES, WHILE BELIEVING THAT SELF-DETERMINATION DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN INDEPENDENCE, AND AWARE OF INHERENT DIFFICULTIES FOR SMALL POPULATION, MANCHAM OBSERVED THAT HE NEVERTHELESS HAD NO OPTION OTHER THAN TO LEAD SEYCHELLES TO INDEPENDENCE. CONTRARY TO COMITE'S EARLIER UNDERSTANDING, NEITHER PARTY IN SEYCHELLES DESIRED "CLOSER LINK" TO UK. INDEPENDENCE HAS BEEN REQUESTED OF HMG FOR AUTUMN OF 1975. MANCHAM SAID UK HAD BEEN "COOPRATIVE" AND HE INVITED COMITE MEMBERS TO SEYCHELLES FOR INDEPENDENCE. MANCHAM SAID HE WILL WORK TOWARD NATIONAL REUNIFICATION AND ALREADY HAS MET TWICE WITH LEADER OF OPPOSITION. INDEPNDENT SEYCHELLES WILL JOIN UN, BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AND OAU. POLITICS WLL BE BASED ON NON-ALIGNMENT AND WILL HAVE AS KEY FOCUS A PEACEFUL

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INDIAN OCEAN.

2. STATEMENTS SUPPORTING MANCHAM WERE MADE BY RAMPHUL (MAURITIUS), OATTARA (OAU), AND TADESSE (ETHIOPIA). RAMPHUL REFERRED TO CERTAIN TERRITORIES IN INDIAN OCEAN WHICH ARE "LEGAL FICTIONS" AND MUST BE LIBERATED.

3. SIERRA LEONEAN REP (JOKA-BANGURA) ASKED MANCHAM DURING DEBATE WHAT HE THOUGHT ABOUT USE OF "PART OF SEYCHELLES AS A US BASE". MANCHAM SAID HE ASSUMED QUESTION REFERRED TO BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY (BIOT). MANCHAM SAID THAT THREE ISLANDS BELONGING TO SEYCHELLES BECAME PART OF BIOT FOLLOWING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN REPS OF SEYCHELLES ASSEMBLY AND UK, AND PAYMENT OF APPROPRIATE COMPENSATION. HE STATED THAT, AS FAR AS HE KNEW, NONE OF THOSE ISLANDS IS BEING USED FOR MILITARY PURPOSES. HE ADDED THAT SEYCHELLES WOULD ANNOUNCE ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD BIOT AS IT APPROACHES INDEPENDENCE, AND MATTER WILL BE DISCUSSED WITH UK AT FORTHCOMING CONSITUTIONAL CONFERENCE.
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